

The Social Questions Bulletin

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THE METHODIST FEDERATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICE
(UNOFFICIAL)

An organization which rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society; which seeks to replace it with social-economic planning in order to develop a society without class distinctions and privileges.

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THE PRICE OF PEACE

By HARRY F. WARD

What does the Munich Agreement mean for the kind of social order, and the approach to it, that we stand for?

What Really Happened

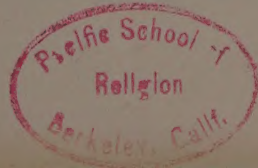
Chamberlain and Daladier did more than yield to the threat of force. They abandoned and betrayed the democratic process. They disposed of the vital resources of another nation without its presence or consent. They thus did the opposite of what the British Parliament and the French Cabinet thought they were going to do. They permitted Hitler's troops to march into the Sudeten area before either the British Parliament or the French Chamber had the opportunity to reject or ratify the arrangement. They provided no effective international control over compensation for the dispossessed, or order in the occupied areas. They only substituted one minorities problem for another. They not only submitted to the threat of force, they enthroned force above reason and justice. Thus the price they paid for averting an immediate conflict was not merely a sacrifice of a small nation. To that was added the destruction of the basis of peace which, as Roosevelt pointed out, is the substitution of reasonable discussion in the search after justice, for the use of force.

Dishonored Covenant

The moral law revealed in history which declares that unjust agreements based on force cannot endure is not nullified by Chamberlain's and Hitler's pledge to substitute conference for resort to war. Their names on this reiteration of the principle of the Kellogg Pact are not even worth as much as the original signatures on that dishonored covenant. The proof of their worthlessness is Chamberlain's announcement that rearmament must continue. Their protestations of a desire for peace are the duplicate of the pious class-meeting words of inhuman industrialists. They serve the same purpose of self-justification and deception of the elect. Chamberlain's vision of himself as the messenger of peace has not even as much basis as that of Woodrow Wilson. Already he is using his agreement with Hitler to detach France from the Soviet Union, to isolate that nation, and to further Hitler's plans for a war of conquest against it. He is using it also to create his long-desired Four Power Alliance as the political expression of the powerful Capi-

talist International, composed of groups of British, French, German and Italian financiers.

Chamberlain is doing by double dealing and indirection what Hitler is doing openly and by reliance on force—destroying the democratic process. The Munich Agreement gave the Fascist dictator an imperial triumph. It handed him the economic resources for further aggression and more effective war. It opened up to him the control of the whole Danubian area. It notified the smaller nations that they could no longer count on the pledged word of Great Britain and France. It thus put a premium upon the further destruction of peace and the crushing of democracy. Already the Nazis are brutally terrorizing the minorities in at least one occupied area and the Poles have demanded and secured territory by the Hitler method. If the Munich Agreement and its consequences are to stand, Europe is handed over to Fascist domination for some time to come. This means that the democratic approach to a new social order, the possibility of economic co-operation and economic planning to adjust



international and racial injustices, to emancipate the oppressed and depressed classes, is imperilled the world over.

What Did It?

What brought about this result contrary to the desires of those who seek peace and approve this settlement under the mistaken judgment that it makes for peace? The combination of the self-interest fear of war and the idealistic abhorrence of war which now almost hysterically hails the destruction of peace in the name of peace, was a potent but not the dominating factor. To get the other related factors into view, two questions have to be answered. Why did Chamberlain and Daladier risk their national interests by strengthening a rival imperialism? Why did they yield to Hitler after the situation had worked out to their advantage? Public opinion was uniting behind them for resistance. Strikes and anti-war demonstrations were beginning in Germany. The General Staff and Goering were against fighting a combination of England, France and Russia because they were not ready and had not sufficient allies. Mussolini had only six weeks' war supplies and was badly scared. Yet they gave to Hitler at Munich what Chamberlain had refused at Godesberg.

When we ask why, two facts emerge. An underlying economic interest, the British and French investments and credits in Germany and Italy. The common enmity to Russia and fear of the common people coming to power at home. This makes the unity in principle an aim between Tory capitalist imperialists and radical Fascist imperialists. This plus the financial stake made Chamberlain and Daladier accomplices of the Fascist dictators in the destruction of democracy.

Reports indicate that German business men were phoning their British associates that Hitler must be saved from both war and defeat without war, as either would mean his overthrow and chaos. Moscow says that the British and French Tories were afraid to put arms into the hands of the masses. Sauerwein, French Tory editor, confirms it by arguing that future policy must be determined by the fact that France and Britain cannot withstand the Fascist powers without the aid of the United States. The alternative is Russian assistance, and this, he says, may mean the triumph of the proletariat in other countries. And can the democracies, he asks, lose millions of men for that?

Thus economic and class interest outweighed for a moment the menace of a rival imperialism, and overruled Chamberlain's horror at the brutal use of force. For the future he and his supporters trust to the power of British finance to dominate the

policies of the Fascist International and hope to use it to destroy the Soviet Union. The question for pacifists of all shades of face is what part their ideals have played and are to play in this unholy alliance and its inevitable results. Are they to be used to help destroy the only possible road to peace and to reestablish the brutal tyranny of ignorant force?

What Is to Be Done?

How can those who know the relationship between peace, the democratic process, and a new economic order prevent themselves from being betrayed by their own ideals?

It is obviously not enough to fall back on the long-time program of change to a new order as the only solution of present injustices, nor to accept the over-simplified generalization that lines up the democracies against the Fascist dictatorships. The revelation by Chamberlain and Daladier of the nature and program of the reactionary capitalist elements in the democracies shows that those who know the relation of the democratic process to a new order of human living must now struggle to release the democratic forces and defeat the anti-democratic elements within the democratic nations.

The pretensions of the reactionaries to bring peace and social well-being must be exposed by sharp analysis. We must demand a foreign policy that disconnects itself sharply from those who are willing to sacrifice other nations and imperil the future of the world for the sake of their own vested interests. We must let not only the Fascist dictators, but their allies within the democratic nations, know that they can get no help from us. We must shut our economic resources away from them by airtight legislation and popular boycott. We must let the genuinely democratic forces in the so-called democracies know that our markets are open to them for the means of resistance to Fascist aggression under conditions designed to protect ourselves from being drawn into war.

This requires defeating those forces in this country who sympathize with the policies of the Fascist powers and would enforce their principles here if they could. The struggle for the international preservation of the democratic process is also the struggle for its preservation here and its extension to our own economic affairs. The measure of our ability to develop a foreign policy that will help to save the world from the consequences of the Munich betrayal of democracy is the extent of our capacity to defeat reactionary capitalism here over such issues as the National Labor Relations Board and the W.P.A.

NO RETREAT

On his return from Europe late in August Charles Webber wrote to a friend a letter, from which certain paragraphs are quoted below:

"The Czechs are convinced that Hitler is determined to dismember and subjugate their country and that he is only using the presence of 3,500,000 Sudeten Germans within the natural and historical boundaries of their country as an excuse for his war of aggression. This contention was confirmed for me by several of the correspondents of our American newspapers in Europe who pointed out that the Czechs treat the minority groups within their State better than the other European states treat theirs, and in particular better than Germany treats the 1,200,000 Poles within its borders.

"The Czechs know how under Hitler Germany has become intolerantly nationalistic, militaristic and despotic in form. They know that there has been a revival of Prussianism in Germany, with its spirit of blind obedience and its brutal arrogance.

"They know that a pseudo-science has swept over Germany, a racial theory, a form of ancestor-worship, which has led many of the German people 'to think with their blood.'

"The Czechs have been horrified by what Hitler and the National Socialist Party have done and by what they propose to do. I, too, found myself horrified by what I saw and heard in Vienna, Austria, now no longer the capital of an independent country but merely a provincial city.

"A policy of retreating before the Fascist nations does not offer us much hope of attaining peace."

SAVE CZECHOSLOVAKIA!

At the "Save Czechoslovakia" meeting held in Madison Square Garden, New York City, September 25, Bishop McConnell presented the following resolutions, which were enthusiastically adopted:

"We reaffirm the position taken by Secretary Hull in his speech on August 19 when he spoke for the United States' deep and abiding interest in the maintenance of international law and morality.

"We express our admiration for the stand which Czechoslovakia has taken. We see in this stand a movement not merely for the defense of the Czechoslovakian nation but for the defense of democracy throughout the world.

"We petition the President and the State Department of our nation to call together the signatory nations of the Kellogg-Briand peace pact in order to consider measures to stop international aggression.

"We petition our government, in case of continued aggression, to warn Germany through appropriate channels that *this nation will pursue a policy of non-intercourse, by which we mean prohibition of all forms of traffic whatsoever between the United States and Germany.*"

The Federation at this meeting pledged itself to raise \$200 for the Czechoslovakian Red Cross. If you are not giving to Czechoslovakia in any other way, will you not use us as your channel and help us fulfill our pledge? Send your check to the office.

BOYCOTT

The boycott of Japanese goods from January to June, 1938, resulted in a 47.3% drop in imports from the corresponding period in 1937.

From Gandhi (July 21, 1938): "My idea of boycott is that it can be a perfectly non-violent measure. When it is that, it becomes a duty. Hence boycott of Japanese goods does become a duty for those who consider Japan to be wholly in the wrong. And when it becomes a duty it takes no count of consequences. And duty has to be performed whether one has companions or not."

Extend the boycott to all aggressor nations threatening world peace. Morally we cannot afford to be participants in forcing war upon the world.

Send for: "America's Share in Japan's War Guilt" (15c).

FIELD SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE: FALL AND WINTER

October-December, 1938: New York Conference, New York East, Newark, New Jersey, Philadelphia, New England Southern, Troy, and Central New York.

January-June 1939: Trip to the Pacific Coast. January—Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan; February—Indiana and Illinois; March—Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas and Iowa; April—Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota; May—Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, and Idaho; June—Washington, Oregon and California.

Members in those states and Conferences desiring Mr. Webber's services should write him at our office.

HIRE AND FIRE

The latest "purge" of the Methodist Board of Education, as Hal Luccock puts it, has left "many Methodists feeling a mixture of shame, humiliation, and indignation." The dismissal of Dr. Merle English—with reasons withheld from what are asserted to be the very best motives—climaxes a series of such dismissals, Geer's,

Kirkpatrick's, and others. A little more light might make for a little less heat just now.

"We are all born with the notion that we have the unqualified right to 'hire and fire' without outside supervision or interference," writes the editor of the *Michigan Christian Advocate*. But times change and customs with them, even economic customs. "In this case the whole church is sitting as an N.L.R.B. and a Methodist democracy sitting as a court of inquiry ought to be trusted, if any democracy can be trusted. Even a Bishop in 1938 cannot stand on a committee's inviolable right to hire and fire."

BAD MANNERS

Bishop Adna W. Leonard, in response to Charles Webber's request to be allowed to mail a copy of the *Social Questions Bulletin* to the members of the West Virginia Conference, replied that while the Federation had a legal right to do this he would consider it "a discourteous act," and that he would inform the Conference of his opposition to the organization. He charged the Federation with being "unethical and unchristian" in arousing unbrotherly feeling, in disseminating propaganda and in connecting itself with dangerous organizations.

EASTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Plans are already under way for an Eastern Regional Conference to be held on December 2 and 3, probably at Union Theological Seminary, New York City. The program will center around the World Crisis and its relation to our Federation program. Suggestions as to specific topics and speakers will be gladly received at the national office. Last year's vital discussions and the success of the whole project make us hopeful that even more of our friends and members will attend this year. Expenses will be kept to the minimum.

METHODIST YOUTH

At the National Conference of Methodist Youth, held at Boulder, Colo., August 30 to September 4, Charles Webber served as Resource Leader in the Commission on Facing Economic Conflicts. The Commission submitted to the entire Conference three resolutions which carried: 1. That labor shall have full right to organize into unions of its own choice and to bargain collectively; that workers in the mass production industries should organize into the industrial type union. 2. That the National Labor Relations Act should be amended to require that agreements reached between unions and employers be signed, thereby making them legal. 3. That the Wages and Hours Act should be amended to make it possible for all workers to receive a decent-standard-of-living wage.

A resolution submitted by the Commis-

sion to the Conference that the Conference record its conviction that the capitalist system with its struggle for profit is the basic and fundamental cause of economic conflicts was lost, 156 to 151, 67 uncertain, and many not voting.

Federation Youth

The members of the National Youth Committee of the M.F.S.S., meeting at Boulder during the National Conference of Methodist Youth, elected Mr. Thomas Page, of Grace Community Church, Denver, to serve as the Federation Youth representative on the National Council of Methodist Youth. Write us as to requirements for membership in this Federation youth group (18 to 26 years, age limits).

RELIEF SHIP TO SPAIN

The Federation, with the cooperation of the Board of Foreign Missions and of the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, is arranging a special consignment of food, clothing and medical aid for the Methodist group in Alicante. Ship sails October 15. Only immediate contributions can be included.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Magill and Stevens: *Peril of Fascism* (International Publishers, \$2.50).
F. Elwyn Jones: *Defence of Democracy* (Dutton, \$2.50).
Ruiz Vilaplana: *Burgos Justice: A Year's Experience of Nationalist Spain* (Knopf, \$2).
Maurice Hindus: *Green Worlds* (Doubleday, Doran, \$3).

MODERN AGE BOOKS (50c each)—

George Seldes: *You Can't Do That*.
Granville Hicks: *I Like America*.
Erika Mann: *School for Barbarians* (Education Under the Nazis).
Anna Louise Strong: *One-Fifth of Mankind* (China Fights for Freedom).

PENGUIN "POLITICAL SPECIALS" (35c each)—

Duchess of Atholl: *Searchlight on Spain*.
Mme. Tabois: *Blackmail or War*.
Edgar A. Mower: *Germany Puts the Clock Back*.

PAMPHLET RECOMMENDATIONS—

People's Program for Peace and Democracy (American League, 5c).
Economic Security and World Peace (L. I. D., 10c).
The Underground Struggle in Germany (L. I. D., 25c).
America Looks Abroad (World Affairs Pamphlets, 25c).
Writers Take Sides in Spain (League of American Writers, 15c).
Case for the Spanish Government (By Langdon Davies, 5c).
Freemasons and Spain (free).
Cardenas' New Year Message (free). *The Good Neighbor* (free).
One Meeting Program Projects (Foreign Policy Association, free). e.g., "Who Is Guilty in Europe?" (A Public Trial); "What Has Dictatorship Done to Religion?" (A Public Hearing), etc.

SUGGESTION: Write to us for full information regarding the Women's Bureau movie, "What's in a Dress?"—available for women's groups free.

NOTE: Charles Webber's *Strikes* is out in revised edition (15c, by mail 18c).

A \$1 membership brings this Bulletin once a month except in July and August. Ask about student group rates.